

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, October 27, 1901

1331 Conn. Ave. Oct 27th 1901 My dear Alec,

It seems a long time since I have written you, but there has not been anything especial to record, except what would be more interesting to Daisy so I have written her. I am going to telegraph her today that Mamma and Gipsev are very anxious for her to come down for their tea. I hate to have Daisy leave you and a place where she seems so happy, but perhaps she had better. What will you do? I do not feel satisfied with Daisy's account of you. I dont hear any more of your walking and I am c m ore than ever impressed with the importance to you of walking. Please please do walk. You can do your thinking while you are walking and thus not lose time, but the report of the doctors on McKinley make me feel that if you should be ill, you will have the same difficulty in recovering.. It seems to me that to practically die from fat is disgraceful. Please do do walk. I dont think you normally eat too much, but when you omit a meal you are apt to be so hungry the next that you do eat more than is good for you. Please take care of yourself.

Or White was at Mamma's yesterday staying over Sunday, Also Dr Gilman. They had a good time telling stories. Mamma had us three to dinner and supper so that Bert should get the benif e i t, and I think that he did. I felt so sorry for Dr White he must feel his family misfortunes so much. He told Mamma all about hem The son was one of the most promising fellows of the class to which he bel i o nged, but he had typhoid fever, and afterwards disregarded the doctor's injunction not to retusn to his class for a year at least. He graduated head of every one most brilliantly, but immediately broke down, and has never been well since, suffering from terrible headaches and melancholia, so that at last he was afraid to be laft alone. His last letters so alarmed his father that he telegraphed him to come on to Germany, but it was too late. When Dr White came to examine his papers

Library of Congress

he found that he must have been going over some calculations, but he could not make them come right and so got discouraged feeling that his mind was failing, and so went upstairs and shot himself.

I gave your telegram to Mr McCurdy. I feel very sorry for him. His machine is at last ready, but what is he to do? Dr Day is here and saw the machine last night and said that it was indeed a big thing, but he said that if Mr McCurdy showed it to Eastman, he would refuse to consider it at all, and then immediately set his men to work making the ebedecs, and in a month would flood the market with them. Of course that would be infringement of Mr McCurdy's patent, but what can he do about it against all Eastman's money? He wants him to make the machines himself, and exhibit them at the St Louis Exposition, and says that he could make enough to pay all his expenses immediately, but that is a great risk. I don't know what Mr McCurdy will decide to do, but it will have to be in a day or two. It is hard to feel that you have a great invention, the product of your own brain and hard work, and to feel that it is worth a great fortune, and yet to be afraid that it will be stolen from you the moment you try to use it.

Please thank Jean for the copies of your dictation. I feel that I am not quite out of touch with you and what you are thinking about. I am constantly expecting a telegram telling me that you have made your machine, and yet I know so well how long a time you have always had to wait between one great advance and another, that I am not surprised that I don't yet hear. But I hope you will, and that you will come back to me. I don't like this business of living away from my husband.

Tell Daisy that I thoroughly agree with her about the tool-house. It was you that wanted to build one instead of making use of the gardener's cottage. I don't see why we shouldn't, and we need the money for other things. I have found that there are many things that must be done here, and that will leave us with nothing for ruffles. The basement walls have not yet been painted, and are in such a condition that I do not like to expect my servants to do things for me if I don't give them decent places to live in. Now I must go. Tell Daisy that her

Library of Congress

Sicilian paper is splendid. I wish that she would write mine for me. I have had to stop work, because the Congressional Library want a sketch of Papa to print with the catalogue of his engravings, and I have had to try and write it and I am finding it hard work.

I met Mr Bancroft the other day, and hi said that he was going down to Virginia to hunt up facts for his history. I said that you had been down and how onteresting you found it hunting for facts, but he did ot seem to find it so. He said that facts in themselves were not interesting, it was not until you got to working them up into your history that they were i teresting. A bare fact he said was like the piece of clothe you buy at the store by the yard, nothing until you have made it up into a garment. I thought this was a very different way of looking at the matter from yours.

your Mabel